

## HEATHER BLAIR

Department of Religious Studies  
230 Sycamore Hall, 1033 E. Third St.  
Indiana University  
Bloomington, IN 47405

(812) 272-5130

FAX (812) 855-4687

heablair@indiana.edu

---

### FACULTY POSITIONS

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana  
Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies, 2015–  
Assistant Professor, Department of Religious Studies, 2009–2015  
Adjunct Faculty, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, 2009–  
Affiliated Faculty, Medieval Studies Institute, 2016–

### EDUCATION

Harvard University, Ph.D. in Religion, 2008  
Columbia University, M.Phil. in Religion, 2004  
University of Washington, M.A. in Comparative Religion, 2000  
Swarthmore College, B.A. in Asian Studies, 1995

### GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Study Abroad Course Development Grant, Office of the Vice Provost for International Affairs (Indiana University), summer 2019  
Residential Fellowship, Institute for Advanced Study (Indiana University), spring 2019  
Seminar on the Religious and Ethical Dimensions of Picturebooks, co-convenor,  
Consortium for the Study of Religion, Ethics, and Society (Indiana University), 2017–19  
Faculty Exchange Grant for research at Waseda University in Tokyo, Office of the Vice Provost for International Affairs (Indiana University), 2018  
Summer Repository Research Fellowship, co-investigator, Institute for Advanced Study (Indiana University), 2016  
New Frontiers of Creativity and Scholarship Grant, Office of the Vice Provost for Research, (Indiana University), 2015  
Research grant, Consortium for the Study of Ethics, Religion, and Society Research (Indiana University), 2014–2015  
Trustees Teaching Award, Department of Religious Studies (Indiana University), 2014  
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Fellowship Postdoctoral Fellowship (Kyoto Prefectural University and Kyoto University), 2012–2013  
College Arts and Humanities Institute Travel Grant (Indiana University), 2012  
Northeast Council Travel Grant (Association of Asian Studies; awarded but not used), 2012  
Fall Fellowship in Korea Studies (Korea Society), 2011  
Stanford Humanities Fellows Postdoctoral Fellowship (Stanford University), 2008–2009  
Weinstein Dissertation Prize in East Asian Buddhism (Yale University), 2009

Whiting Dissertation Completion Fellowship (Harvard University), 2007–2008  
Fulbright IIE Fellowship (Tokyo University), 2005–2006  
Kennedy Traveling Fellowship (Harvard University), 2005  
Japan Foundation Fellowship (declined), 2005  
Fellow of the Faculty (Harvard University), 2004–2005, 2007  
International Shinto Foundation Fellowship (Columbia University), 2001–2004  
Title VI (FLAS) Fellowship (Columbia University), 2000–2001  
Title VI (FLAS) Fellowship (University of Washington), 1999–2000  
Webb Prize in Comparative Religion (University of Washington), 2000

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **Single-author books**

#### *Published:*

*Real and Imagined: The Peak of Gold in Heian Japan*. Harvard East Asia Monographs, no. 376.  
Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015.

#### *In preparation:*

*The Gods Make You Giggle: Finding Religion in Japanese Picturebooks*. Manuscript in preparation: revision stage.

*Reverently I Pray: Buddhist Devotion and Literary Elegance*. Manuscript in preparation: research stage.

### **Edited volumes**

Editor (with Kawasaki Tsuyoshi). *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 42, no. 1 (2015), special issue on temple/shrine origin accounts.

### **Peer-reviewed journal articles**

#### *Published:*

“Smith at Play.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 87, no. 1 (2019): 22–25, doi:10.1093/jaarel/lfy044

“Mothers of the Buddhas: Scriptural Invention and Reproductive Soteriology in the *Sutra on Transforming Women into Buddhas (Tennyō jōbutsukyō)*.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 71, no. 2 (2016, published in 2017): 263–93.

“Ladylike Religion: Ritual and Agency in the Life of an Eleventh-Century Japanese Noblewoman.” *History of Religions* 56, no. 1 (2016): 1–22.

(with Kawasaki Tsuyoshi.) “*Engi*: Forging Accounts of Sacred Origins.” Editor’s Introduction. *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 42, no. 1 (2015): 1–26.

“Shinshutsu ‘Gōki itsubun’ shōkai: Shirakawa-in no Kanji roku-nen no Mitake mōde o megutte” (Introduction to a newly discovered fragment of the *Gōki*: On Retired Emperor Shirakawa’s Kanji 6 [1092] pilgrimage to Kinpusen). *Setsuma bungaku kenkyū*, 49 (2014): 32–40.

(Editor.) “‘Gōki itsubun’ honkoku” (Transcription of a fragment of the *Gōki*). *Setsuma bungaku kenkyū*, 49 (2014): 41–46.

“Rites and Rule: Kiyomori at Itsukushima and Fukuhara.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 73, no. 1 (2013): 1–42.

“Religion and Politics in Heian-Period Japan.” *Religion Compass* 7, no. 8 (2013): 284–93.

- “Zaō Gongen: From Mountain Icon to National Treasure.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 66, no. 1 (2011): 1–45.
- “Buddhism as a Local Religion.” In *Buddhism: Oxford Bibliographies Online*, edited by Richard Payne. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, revised 2015.
- “Japanese Buddhist Art and Architecture.” In *Buddhism: Oxford Bibliographies Online*, edited by Richard Payne. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- “Mandala.” In *Buddhism: Oxford Bibliographies Online*, edited by Richard Payne. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, revised 2015.

### Peer-reviewed book chapters

- “When Sad Is Good: Affect among Friends in and out of Japanese Picturebooks.” In *Historicizing Emotions: Practices and Objects in India, China, and Japan*, edited by Barbara Schuler, 297–326. Leiden: Brill, 2017.
- “Kiyomori, Fukuhara, and Itsukushima.” In *Lovable Losers: The Taira in Action and Memory*, edited by Mikael S. Adolphson and Anne Commons, 58–77. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2015.
- “Buddhism in Japanese History.” In *Blackwell Companion to East and Inner Asian Buddhism*, edited by Mario Poceski, 84–102. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2014.

### Other publications, including translations

- “Zaō Gongen.” In *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Buddhism, vol. 2: Lives*, edited by Richard Bowring, Vincent Eltschinger, and Michael Radich, 1139–1142. Boston: Brill, 2019.
- (Translator.) Takagishi Akira, “The Reproduction of *Engi* and Memorial Offerings: Multiple Generations of the Ashikaga Shoguns and the *Yūzū nenbutsu engi emaki*.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 42, no. 1 (2015): 157–82.
- “Mountain and Plain: Kinpusen and Kōfukuji in the Middle Ages.” In *Nara, nanto bukkyō no dentō to kakushin* (Tradition and innovation in Nara Buddhism), edited by Samuel C. Morse and Nemoto Seiji, 1–39. Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 2010.
- (Translator.) Suzuki Shōei, “*Suijaku* Stories about Zaō Gongen.” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie*, 18 (2009, published 2011): 141–68.
- “Peak of Gold: Trace, Place, and Religion in Heian Japan.” Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2008.
- “Nihon no shūkyō” (Japanese religions), *Higashi Ajia hikaku bunka kenkyū* 6 (2007).

### INVITED LECTURES

- “Picturing Otherwise: Art, Life, and the Posthuman in Postmillennial Japanese Picturebooks.” Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, December 5, 2019.
- “Picturing Otherwise: Artistic Imagination in Postwar and Postmillennial Japanese Picturebooks.” East Asian Studies Center, Indiana University, November 1, 2019.
- “Stock Religious Characters in Secular Stories for Children: What Can Japanese Religions Teach Us?” Vanderbilt University, February 28, 2019.
- “Image/Argument/Thing: Stock Characters in Japanese Picturebooks from the Postwar to the Present.” Terasaki Center for Japanese Studies, University of California Los Angeles, November 5, 2018.
- “What Counts? Picturebooks, Buddhism, and Japanese Culture.” Ho Center for Buddhist Studies, Stanford University, February 22, 2018.

- “The Good, the Sad, and the Funny: Morality and Affect in Japanese Picturebooks.” Institute of Comparative Culture, Sophia University, Tokyo, October 12, 2017.
- “The Good, the Sad, and the Funny: Morality and Affect in Japanese Picturebooks.” East Asia Center, University of California Santa Barbara, October 4, 2017.
- “The Gods Make You Giggle: Finding Religion in Modern and Contemporary Japanese Picturebooks.” Symposium on Japanese Buddhism at University of Pennsylvania, March 19, 2016.
- “Affecting Religion: Picturebooks and the Configuration of Childhood Virtues.” Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, December 4, 2015.
- “Oh, Hell! The Horrible and the Hilarious in Secular Japanese Picturebooks.” DePauw University, December 2, 2015.
- “Oh, Hell! The Horrible and the Hilarious in Secular Japanese Picturebooks.” Lewis and Clark College, October 29, 2015.
- “The Gods Make You Giggle: Finding Religion in Japanese Picturebooks.” Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, October 8, 2015.
- “Hell is Hilarious! Buddhist Hell and Secularity in Post-War Japanese Picture Books.” Buddhist Studies Forum, Harvard University, September 21, 2015.
- “Ladylike Religion: On Family, Gender, and Devotion in Heian Japan.” Council on East Asian Studies, Yale University, January 29, 2014.
- “Mere Mummery or Real Religion? A Noblewoman’s Religiosity in the ‘World of the Shining Prince.’” Asian Studies Group, Kyoto, Japan, July 8, 2013.
- “Politics and Piety: Heian Religious Culture.” Lecture and graduate seminar series. Humanities Faculty, Kyūshū University, February 18–19, 2013.
- “Naze Nihon ni kyōmi o motta ka? Kyōshitsu kara yama no ue e” (From the classroom to the mountain: How I became interested in Japan). Niigata University, Humanities Faculty, February 6, 2013.
- “The Power of Rites: Buddhism, Kami Worship, and Lordship in Early Medieval Japan.” Buddhist Studies Seminar, Columbia University, April 27, 2012.
- “Impure Vessel or Mother of the Buddhas? Scripture, Liturgy, and Women’s Salvation in Heian Japan.” Center for Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Iowa, February 24, 2012.
- “Religious Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous.” Japan Workshop, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, April 21, 2011.
- “Ritual Regimes: Elite Religiosity in Heian Japan.” East Asian Studies Center Colloquium, Indiana University, February 18, 2011.
- “On Gender and Apocrypha.” Yale University, February 25, 2010.
- “Sacred, Scrap or Art? The Modern Career of Zaō Gongen.” University of Washington, October 19, 2009.
- “11<sup>th</sup>-Century Japanese Pilgrims’ Practices.” Ho Center for Buddhist Studies, Stanford University, October 8, 2008.

## **CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

- “Managing Style and Marking Allusion.” Translating across Time and Cultures conference. Indiana University India Gateway, Delhi, India, January 2020.

- “Convention and Idiosyncrasy: Doing Nirvana with Princess Tokushi in the Early Twelfth Century.” Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion. San Diego, November 2019.
- “Living Right: ‘Life’ (Inochi) in Millennial Japan.” Roundtable presentation. Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion. San Diego, November 2019.
- “Prayer and Family: Writing Relationships in Ōe no Masafusa’s *Ganmon*.” Premodern Japanese Studies Conference. McGill University, Canada, October 2019.
- “Seeing Empathy in Contemporary Japanese Picturebooks.” Annual meeting of the Children’s Literature Association. Indianapolis, June 2019.
- “Art/Heritage/Literature: Seeing the Heike in Picturebooks.” Asian Studies in Japan Conference. Saitama University, Japan, June 2019.
- “Reading, Togetherness, and Picturebooks.” Religion & Literature workshop. Indiana University, October 2018.
- Panel response (“Narrative and Space in Japanese History”). Annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. Denver, March 2018.
- Panel response (“Buddhist Social Networks in Premodern Japan”). Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Denver, November 2018.
- Participant and respondent. *Ganmon* Liturgies in East Asia symposium. Columbia University, October 2018.
- “Recognizing Religion in Picturebooks.” Seminar on Ethical and Religious Dimensions of Children’s Literature. Indiana University, November 2017.
- “Religious Stock Characters in Japanese Picturebooks.” Transnationalizing the History of Childhood in Russia, Korea, Japan, and the United States workshop. University of California Santa Barbara, October 2017.
- “The Queen’s Prayers.” International Conference on Buddhist Manuscript Cultures. Princeton University, January 2017.
- “Stock Religious Characters in Japanese Picturebooks.” Annual meeting of the Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, January 2017.
- “Belonging and Beauty: Trees in the Environmental Imaginary of Japanese Picturebooks.” Wonder and the Natural World conference, Consortium for the Study of Ethics, Religion and Society, Indiana University, Bloomington, June 2016.
- “The Importance of the Everyday: Using Courtiers’ Journals to Understand Religious Lifestyles.” Annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Seattle, March 2016.
- “Reverently I Pray: Ritual and Literary Audiences for Liturgical Prayers in Heian Japan.” Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, November 2015.
- “The Rhetoric of Grief: Encomium and Affect.” Annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Chicago, March 2015.
- “Super-Natural: Natural and Supernatural in Japanese Picturebooks.” Consortium for the Study of Ethics, Religion and Society, Indiana University, Bloomington, May 2015.
- “Hell and Humor in Secular Japanese Picture Books.” Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, November 2014.
- “Genre, Mode of Representation, or Sheer Eclecticism? Thinking through Medieval *Engi*.” Biennial meeting of the European Association for Japanese Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia, August 2014.
- “Shinshutsu ‘*Gōkei* itsubun:’ Shirakawa-in no Kanji roku-nen no Mitake mode o megutte” (Introducing a new fragment of the *Gōkei*: Retired Emperor Shirakawa’s 1092 pilgrimage to Kinpusen). Special meeting of the Setsuwa Bungakukai (Society for the Study of Narrative Literature), Tokyo, April 2013.

- “Ritual Regimes, from the Fujiwara Regency to the Taira Ascendancy.” Beyond Sectarianism: New Horizons for Interdisciplinary Studies in Japanese Buddhism. International Symposium held at Harvard University Reischauer Institute for Japanese Studies, May 2012.
- “Kame kame kame kame kame Chameleon: Karmic Transformations from Xuanzang to *Dragon Ball*.” Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Francisco, November 2011.
- “Ritual Regimes: Kiyomori, Itsukushima, and Fukuhara.” Loveable Losers: The Taira in Action and Memory. Inter-disciplinary conference sponsored by University of Alberta and University of British Columbia, Banff, August 2011.
- “Pre-sponse to “Transcription and Transformation: Buddhist Manuscript Cultures.”” Annual meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, Honolulu, April 2011.
- “Textual Reproduction and Ritual Mimesis at Itsukushima.” Annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Japanese Literature, Yale University, October 2010.
- “Masafusa, Shirakawa, and the Rhetoric of *Insei* Kingship.” Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, October 2010.
- “Impure Vessel or Mother of the Buddhas? Women, Buddhahood, and Scriptural Invention.” Purity Workshop, Columbia Center for Japanese Religion, Columbia University, February 2010.
- “Burying the Dharma in the Southern Mountains.” Numata Conference on Buddhist Practice, University of Toronto, April 2009.
- “*Engi* as a Response to the Medieval Order: Kinpusen and Kumano.” Biennial meeting of the European Association of Japanese Studies, Lecce, Italy, September 2008.
- “Junking the Treasures of the Mountain King.” Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, November 2007.
- “The Stuff of Life: Buried Scriptures and Treasured Diaries in Heian Japan.” Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, November 2007.
- “Nichizō, the Genre-Crossing Holy Man.” Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Washington, DC, November 2006.

## BOOK REVIEWS

- Women, Rites, and Ritual Objects in Premodern Japan*, edited by Karen M. Gerhart. *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 46, no. 2 (2020): 459–63.
- Women in Japanese Religions*, by Barbara Ambros. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 78, no. 1 (2018): 201–203.
- Mountain Mandalas: Shugendō in Kyūshū*, by Allan Grapard. *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 43, no. 2 (2017): 403–407.
- Imagining Exile in Heian Japan: Banishment in Law, Literature and Cult*, by Brian Stockdale. *Reading Religions*, July 2016, <http://readingreligion.org/books/imagining-exile-heian-japan>.
- The Halo of Golden Light: Imperial Authority and Buddhist Ritual in Heian Japan*, by Asuka Sango. *Journal of Japanese Religions* 5, no. 1 (2016): 89–92.
- “Pilgrimage to the Sacred Traces of Kōyasan,” by Ethan Lindsay. *Dissertation Reviews*, 2014 (<http://dissertationreviews.org/archives/8219>).
- The Face of Jizō*, by Hank Glassman. *H-Buddhism*, *H-Net Reviews*, October 2012.
- With a Single Glance*, by Cynthia Bogel. *Museum Anthropology Review* 5, nos. 1–2 (2011): 144–46.

*Shugendō Now*, Empower Productions. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 18 (2011): 164–69.  
*The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen. *Japanese Studies*  
28, no. 1 (2008): 122–24.

## **COURSES TAUGHT**

“East Asian Buddhism,” Indiana University, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2018, 2019  
“Japanese Religions,” Indiana University, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016; Stanford University,  
2009  
“Religion and Children’s Literature,” Indiana University, 2018  
“Religion and/as Fantasy,” Indiana University, 2016, 2019  
“Place, Gender, Justice, Religion,” Indiana University, 2015  
“Sacred Sites: Pilgrimage and Heritage,” co-taught with J. Schott, Indiana University, 2015  
“Buddhism and Popular Culture,” Indiana University, 2012, 2014, 2018  
“Kung-fu Heroes and Anime Goddesses: East Asian Religions and Popular Culture,”  
Indiana University, Indiana University, 2013, 2015  
“Religions of Asia,” Indiana University, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2014  
“Reading Japanese Sources” (reading group or independent study), Indiana University, 2010,  
2015, 2016, 2019; Harvard University, 2007  
“Sacred Mountains in Asian Religions,” Indiana University, 2009  
“Mountains in Buddhist Practice,” Stanford University, 2008  
“Medieval Japanese Religion and the Arts,” Harvard University, 2005

## **RESEARCH AFFILIATIONS**

Waseda University  
Visiting researcher, summer 2018  
Kyoto University  
Visiting researcher, 2013  
Kyoto Prefectural University  
Visiting researcher, 2012–2013  
Ho Center for Buddhist Studies, Stanford University  
Research affiliate, 2008–2009  
Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Harvard University  
Graduate student associate, 2007–2008  
Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University  
Resident and assistant proctor, 2007–2008  
Historiographical Institute, Tokyo University  
Foreign researcher, 2005–2007  
Burke Museum, University of Washington  
Archivist for the Archaeology Department, 1997–2000

## **SERVICE**

### **Editorial and review boards**

Kuroda Institute of Buddhist Studies (University of Hawai‘i Pres), 2020–  
*Journal of Japanese Religious Studies*, editorial consultant, 2018–

Bloomsbury Shinto Studies (Bloomsbury Press), 2015–  
CIES Fulbright Specialist Peer Review Committee, reviewer, 2015–2016  
Buddhism: Oxford Bibliographies Online (Oxford University Press), 2009–2010

### **Manuscript reviews**

I have reviewed book or article manuscripts for the following publishers and journals:

University of Hawai'i Press  
Bloomsbury Academic  
Oxford University Press  
Wiley-Blackwell  
Brill  
*Monumenta Nipponica*  
*Harvard Journal of Asian Studies*  
*Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies*  
*Impressions*  
*Book History*  
*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*  
*History of Religions*  
*Journal of Asian Humanities at Kyushu University*

### **Service in professional organizations**

American Academy of Religion, Steering committee, Japanese Religions Group, 2010–2016  
Society for the Study of Japanese Religions, vice president, 2014–2017

### **University service**

Office of the Vice Provost for Research  
New Frontiers reviewer, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020  
Office of the Vice President for International Affairs, Indiana University  
Fulbright-III Fellowships reviewer, 2013–16  
Pre-Dissertation Research Grants reviewer, 2011–12  
College of Arts and Sciences, Indiana University  
Elected member, College Policy Committee, spring 2019–  
Interim appointed member, College Planning Committee, spring 2018  
Convener, faculty writing group, 2010–12, 2015–  
Co-convener, Animation Reading Group, 2019–2020  
East Asian Studies Center, Indiana University  
Executive committee, 2013–15, 2019–21  
Department of Religious Studies, Indiana University  
Ad-hoc committee on undergraduate curriculum, 2019–2020  
Search committee for Hebrew Bible, 2019  
Committee on community engagement, 2018–19  
Director of Undergraduate Studies, July 2015–December 2016  
Committee on curriculum assessment, 2014  
Committee on teaching excellence, 2013–14  
Committee on joint Religious Studies and International Studies minor, 2013–14  
Colloquium organizer, 2011–12  
Search committee for Chinese Religions, 2010  
Undergraduate and community engagement committee, 2009-10



IUB Care Caucus, Indiana University

Initial organizer and member of intersectional collective aiming to improve work conditions for members of the university and broader community who are disproportionately burdened by the labor of care, 2020–

### **Professional memberships**

American Academy of Religion, member, 1999–

Association for Asian Studies, member, 2007–

European Association for Japanese Studies, member, 2008–2010

Society for the Study of Japanese Religions, member, 2009–

Children's Literature Association, member, 2016–

Modern Language Association, member, 2016–2017

International Research Society for Children's Literature, 2018–

### **STUDENT ADVISEMENT AND MENTORING**

Advisor, Yuki Liu, honors B.A. thesis, Religious Studies, Indiana University, 2020–

Advisor, Joseph Decker, Ph.D. student, Religious Studies, Indiana University, 2019–

Advisor, Daniel Layton, M.A. student, Religious Studies, Indiana University, 2018–

Advisor, Allison Darmody, Ph.D. candidate, Religious Studies, Indiana University, 2015–

Interim advisor, Angela Harris, MA in Japanese studies, Indiana University, EALC, 2016

Advisor, Shelby Everett, honors B.A. thesis, Religious Studies, Indiana University, 2014–15

Advisor, Colleen Leahy, honors B.A. thesis, Religious Studies, Indiana University, 2013–14

Committee member, Alexandria Frauman, MA thesis. EALC, Indiana University, 2012

Mentor, Amber Sanders, "Christianity in Meiji Japan." McNair Scholars Program, Indiana University, 2011

Interim advisor, Allison Darmody, MA in Japanese studies. Indiana University, EALC, 2010–11

Advisor, Lar Ka Paw, B.A. thesis, International Studies, Indiana University, Fall 2010

Advisor, Chris Hall, "Religious Dictionary" (iPhone application), independent research project, Religious Studies, Indiana University, Fall 2010